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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 DHA-02 ORM-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 SCCT-01 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR SHUM, AR,

SUBJECT: ARREST OF CHILEAN REFUGEES
REF: STATE 140914

1. ALL TWENTY-FIVE REFUGEES WERE RELEASED JUNE 12. ALL ARE CHILEAN--WITH EXCEPTION OF PROPRIETOR OF ONE OF THE HOTELS WHO WAS PARAGUAYAN AND APPARENTLY WAS TAKEN ALONG BECAUSE HE PROTESTED TOO LOUDLY RAID ON HIS ESTABLISHMENT.

2. REFUGEES HAVE CONFIRMED THAT THEY WERE TAKEN AWAY IN USUAL UNMARKED FORD FALCONS AFTER SOME THIRTY-FIVE TO FIFTY GUNMEN HAD RAIDED TWO HOTELS WHERE REFUGEES WERE HOUSED UNDER AUSPICES OF UN. RAID REPORTED BY PRESS TO HAVE BEEN CARRIED OUT IN BRUTAL MANNER, WITH FAMILIES HANDLED VERY ROUGHLY. ACCORDING TO REFUGEES, GUNMEN IDENTIFIED THEMSELVES AS REPRESENTING "SUPERINTENDENCY OF ARMY
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PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS _____

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POLICE." (IN FACT, SO FAR AS WE KNOW, NO SUCH ORGANIZATION EXISTS IN ARMY). TWENTY-FIVE MALE REFUGEES, INCLUDING SEVERAL WHO WERE ILL, WERE BLINDFOLDED AND TAKEN TO WHAT THEY BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN A BARRACKS, WHERE THEY WERE BEATEN, TORTURED WITH ELECTRIC PRODS AND WARNED TO GET OUT OF ARGENTINA. ALL WERE THEN RELEASED.

3. UN REP GUY PRIM TOLD EMBOFF LAST NIGHT THAT THE TWENTY-FIVE WERE THREATENED WITH DEATH IF THEY TALKED TOO MUCH ABOUT THEIR ORDEAL. [illegible] ARE IN BAD SHAPE PHYSICALLY, ALL ARE NATURALLY EXTREMELY FRIGHTENED, ACCORDING TO PRIM, AND WANT TO LEAVE ARGENTINA AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. PRIM INDICATED UN REFUGEE OFFICE HERE IS IN CONTACT WITH GENEVA AND IS TRYING TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS TO MOVE THEM TO OTHER COUNTRIES. HE HINTED THAT UN WOULD BE DELIGHTED IF US WOULD ACCEPT A FEW.

4. GOA HAS NOT YET ISSUED ANY STATEMENTS OF ITS OWN REGARDING ABDUCTION; RATHER, IT HAS RESPONDED TO UN REFUGEE OFFICE WHICH HAS IN TURN PASSED ON RESPONSES TO PRESS. ACCORDING TO UN REPS, WHEN THEY CALLED TO REPORT THE RAID AND MASS KIDNAPPING AND TO ASK GOA TO TAKE IMMEDIATE MEASURES TO ASSURE SAFE RETURN, GOA OFFICIALS EXPRESSED SHOCK, DEPLORED ACT AND GAVE ASSURANCES THAT MEASURES WOULD BE TAKEN TO FIND AND RETURN THE TWENTY-FIVE AND TO PROTECT OTHER REFUGEES. IN FACT, POLICEMEN WERE IMMEDIATELY PLACED ON GUARD DUTY OUTSIDE ALL HOTELS HOUSING REFUGEES.

5. IN SUBSEQUENT COMMUNICATION (JUNE 12) TO UN REPS HERE, GOA AGAIN DEPLORED ACT AND STATED OPERATION HAD NOT BEEN CARRIED OUT BY POLICE OR MILITARY UNITS. (NOTE: ORIGINAL WORDING SAID IT HAD NOT BEEN CARRIED OUT BY "IRREGULAR POLICE OR MILITARY UNITS" -- THUS LEAVING QUESTION AS TO WHETHER IT HAD BEEN CARRIED OUT BY "REGULAR" UNITS. GOA QUICKLY CHANGED WORDING TO REFER TO ALL UNITS.

6. UN REFUGEE OFFICE HERE HAS COMMENTED TO US THAT THEY ARE SATISFIED SO FAR WITH GOA RESPONSE IN THIS MATTER. MANY OBSERVERS, HOWEVER, ARE ASKING THEMSELVES WHETHER IT IS CREDIBLE THAT THIRTY-FIVE TO FIFTY ARMED MEN COULD WITH IMPUNITY RAID AND CONDUCT A LENGTHY SEARCH (GUNMEN WERE AT HOTELS FOR OVER HALF AN HOUR) OF TWO HOTELS UNLESS THEY ENJOYED COOPERATION AND SUPPORT FROM ELEMENTS WITHIN GOA SECURITY FORCES?

7. CHARGE' WILL SEE AMBASSADOR PERU RA, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF

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POLICY AT FOREIGN MINISTRY, JUNE 19 AND WILL RAISE MATTER WITH HIM, EXPRESSING USG'S CONCERN FOR SAFETY OF REFUGEES HERE. CHAPLIN

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